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Ghana

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I. Methodology

1. After the second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) cycle in October 2012, Ghana accepted 123 of the recommendations and rejected 25. Ghana has fully and or partially implemented some of the recommendations. Some of the recommendations are in the process of being implemented. This report focuses on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations which were accepted by Ghana at the second cycle of the UPR. The report is based on the recommendations and the subtitles are tailored on the recommendations.

2. In drafting this report, the guidelines contained in decision 17/119 of the Human Rights Council were closely followed.

3. Ghana is yet to set up a standing coordinating body for the implementation of recommendations and reporting. A draft roadmap has been prepared (for adoption) for the implementation of recommendations and to also establish the standing coordinating body. Nevertheless, an ad hoc working group made up of various Government institutions was inaugurated to collate the report.

4. Like the first and second UPR cycles, this national report was prepared by the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice after a broad consultative process involving Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Health, Gender Children and Social Protection, Education, Employment and Labour Relations, Lands and Natural Resources, the Police Service, the Prisons Service and the Judicial Service. Others include the Ghana Aids Commission (GAC), the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Births and Deaths Registry.

5. The United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator for Ghana, Ms. Evans-Klock organized two broad consultative meetings with the Office of the Attorney General. The first meeting involved representatives of the various UN agencies and the second meeting was attended by various human rights Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Representatives present at these two meetings made valuable inputs and comments to the report.

II. Development since the second review

Constitution – Review of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana

6. The Government of Ghana after studying the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), which was set up to review the Operation of the 1992 Constitution, issued a White Paper in October, 2012 and stated its position on the recommendations. Subsequently, the Government set up a Constitution Review Implementation Committee (CRIC) in October 2012 to implement the recommendations, which fall into two categories, those that require referenda and those that do not.

7. However, in July 2014 a court action was instituted against Government in the Supreme Court of Ghana challenging the constitutionality of the work of CRC. The court action stalled the work of the CRC until judgment was delivered in favour of the State in October 2015. The recommendations of the CRC are yet to be implemented.

8. On Death Penalty, Cabinet granted approval for its abolition on 24th April, 2014. This is an entrenched constitutional provision which requires a referendum for its repeal from Ghana's statute books.

The 2016 elections

9. Ghana is a constitutional democracy with a strong presidency and a unicameral 275-seat parliament. Ghana once again on the basis of her observance of human rights principles successfully undertook the 2016 elections peacefully, like the five previous presidential and parliamentary elections conducted under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Generally, the presidential and parliamentary elections conducted in December, 2016 were peaceful, transparent, inclusive and credible. The security services maintained law and order in the entire country.

10. There are no laws in Ghana that precludes women or minorities from voting, running for office, serving as electoral monitors, or otherwise participating in political life on the same basis as men or non-minority citizens. Women in Ghana however, held fewer leadership positions than men. The 2016 elections resulted in 37 women being elected to parliament. Presidential candidates included one woman and one physically challenged person.

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment

11. Ghana ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) on 24th June, 2016.

Gender-based issues

12. A national End Child Marriage Project was launched in February, 2016 by the First Ladies of Africa in February, 2016.

13. Capitation Grant for Basic Education, Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), School Feeding Programme, Free School Uniforms and Free Sandals have been introduced to increase access to and improve quality of education, reduce poverty and promote overall socio economic development.

Rights of prisoners

14. Remand population of the Prison Service has reduced significantly as a result of the 'Justice for All Programme'.

Promotion of health service

15. Community – based Health and Planning Services (CHPS) system has been introduced to promote health services in remote communities of the country.

Free education

16. Government will implement a Free Senior High School Education in September 2017 aimed at improving access to Secondary Education.

III. Implementation of accepted recommendations

A. Ratification of international conventions

17. Ghana ratified the three Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in December, 2016, namely the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OP-CRC-AC), the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children and the Optional Protocol on Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OP-CRC-SC). Even though Ghana signed on to the newest OP to CRC on Communications Procedure on 24th September, 2013, it is yet to ratify.

18. Ghana is yet to ratify the ILO Convention 189 (2011) concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Ghana acceded to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption (the Hague Convention) and became the 98th Contracting Party to accede to the Convention. The Convention entered into force on 1st January, 2017. The Children's (Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act 913) has incorporated Articles 18-20 of the Hague Convention.

19. Ghana ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) on 24th June, 2016.

B. Integrating international conventions into domestic law

20. Ghana subscribes to the dualist tradition in international law. Therefore, under Article 75 of the 1992 Constitution, an international convention has to be ratified by Parliament. This has been affirmed in the case of ***Republic v High Court (Comm. Div) Accra ex parte Attorney-General; NML Capital Ltd., the Republic of Argentina*** **(No. J5/10/2013, 20th June 2013, pg 2).**

C. Strengthening of CHRAJ

21. Article 218 of the Constitution, 1992, gives the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) the mandate to investigate complaints of violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

22. The Constitution Review Commission (CRC) has recommended the expansion of the current Commissioners from three to five to reflect the three mandates of CHRAJ and the creation of Commissioners responsible for special groups.

23. The CRC has recommended strengthening of the enforcement mandate of CHRAJ to render its decisions analogous to that of the courts.

D. National Action Plan on human rights

24. CHRAJ is developing a National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) to take into account the United Nations Development Agenda 2030.

E. Non discrimination

25. Article 17 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides that:

(a) All persons shall be equal before the law;

(b) A person shall not be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, creed or social or economic status.

26. CHRAJ has developed and is implementing a Discrimination Reporting System (DRS) to address issues concerning stigma and discrimination suffered by vulnerable groups particularly people living with HIV and AIDS (PLHIV) and key populations.

27. Under the DRS being implemented by CHRAJ, the rights of persons based on their sexual orientation or gender identity are protected. These include protection against violence, access to healthcare, stigmatization and discrimination directed at such persons and etc.

28. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) has structures in place to ensure that all persons are not discriminated against. The Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Secretariats, the Departments of Gender and Social Welfare and Child and Social Protection Programmes too ensure that women, children, persons with disabilities (PWDs), the vulnerable and excluded in society are protected and given the opportunity to participate fully in National Development.

F. Economic and social welfare

29. Ghana's current development blueprint, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II (GSGDA II) largely incorporates the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In spite of this, Ghana is implementing social protection programmes such as Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), which includes Capitation Grants, School Feeding Programme, Free Exercise Books, Free School Uniforms, Free Laptops and Free Sandals. Under the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), the Government seeks among others, to alleviate poverty among vulnerable groups such as children, the aged and the severely disabled.

30. The Capitation Grant (GC) is one of the social intervention programmes introduced in 2005 by the Government with the aim of abolishing school fees in basic education, alleviating poverty and providing equal opportunities to all children of school-going age. The Government has recently introduced a policy of free Senior High School education effective September, 2017.

G. Access to justice

31. The Legal Aid Scheme Act is under review to strengthen the institution providing legal advice and legal assistance for people in need. A Public Defenders' Directorate is provided for under the reviewed Act in line with the Director of Public Prosecutions and this is expected to help ameliorate the deficiency. The resultant Bill is due to be presented to Cabinet for approval.

32. To deal with the issue of the backlog of remand cases, the Attorney-General's Office initiated the '***Justice for All Programme***' in September 2007. This programme addresses the problem of remand prisoners who have been in custody for a long period of time, and whose remand warrants have expired. Through the programme, many remand prisoners have been discharged either unconditionally or with conditions, whilst others have been granted bail.

33. The Ghana Prisons Service has established a Paralegal Department with branches in all the major prisons where inmates who are dissatisfied with their respective sentences are guided through the appeal process.

H. Death penalty

34. The CRC recommended that the death penalty should be abolished and replaced with life imprisonment without parole. Among the reasons it cited for its recommendation included the irreversible consequences of executing wrongfully-convicted individuals, the failure of the death penalty as a deterrent, the barbaric nature of the punishment, the fact that executions did not necessarily provide closure to victims' families, the arbitrariness of the punishment, the dehumanizing effect of executions, the need to focus instead on rehabilitation and the current international practice which is in favour of abolition of the death penalty.

35. In this regard, a Bill has been drafted for abolition of the death penalty following the recommendations of the CRC. The abolition of the death penalty, however, requires a referendum in accordance with the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

I. Prohibition of torture

36. During the initial review of Ghana by the Committee against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatments or Punishment (CAT) in 2012, Ghana accepted the recommendation by the Committee to enact legislation to criminalise torture.

37. Torture, as defined in Article 1 of CAT, has not yet been incorporated into the Criminal and Other Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29). Nonetheless, torture is prohibited in Ghana and provisions can be found, for instance, in the Mental Health Act, 2012 (Act 846) and the Prisons Service Act, 1972 (NRCD 46). The Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694) and the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2008 (Act 762) also provide indices against torture or cruel or inhuman treatment.

38. With regard to the Ghana Police Service, personnel are prohibited from torturing or administering any form of ill-treatment to persons in detention facilities as provided by Regulation 82(1) (j) of the Police Service Regulations, 2012 (C.I. 76), which states that *"it is a major offence for an officer to maltreat or use unnecessary force towards a person in the officer's custody"*. To this end, the Ghana Police Service has established the Police Intelligence and Professional Standards (PIPS) Unit which investigates cases of professional misconduct and ill-treatment of detainees and recommends punishment for perpetrators. Reported cases of torture and ill-treatment are investigated and perpetrators are made to face an internal disciplinary action.

39. The second leg of disciplinary action is criminal prosecution of the perpetrator. This is normally done on the advice of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. The punishment for prosecution, if the perpetrator is convicted, is the same as provided under sentencing in the Criminal Procedure Act (Act 30) of 1960 with no exception whatsoever. It is worthy of note that the decision to either subject a perpetrator to an administrative service enquiry or criminal prosecution in a court of competent jurisdiction is not mutually exclusive. Both can be pursued at the same time according to sections 9(1) (2) of the Criminal Offences Act (Act 29) of 1960. The remedy for victims of use of excessive force and unlawful killings is financial compensation.

J. Conditions in detention centres

40. Ghana is guided by the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) as well as the Guidelines on the Conditions of Arrest, Police Custody and Pre-Trial Detention in Africa (the Luanda Guidelines). In particular, the operations of the Ghana Prisons Service and the Ghana Police Service are

regulated by Standard Operation Procedures consistent with the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Luanda Guidelines.

41. CHRAJ has the mandate to investigate complaints of violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms. Despite the absence of a designated National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), CHRAJ has since 1995 been conducting visits to places of detention. The ratification and implementation of the OPCAT will ensure the establishment of a NPM to undertake regular visits to places of detention in order to monitor conditions in detention centres.

42. Article 15(4) of the 1992 Constitution categorically states that *"a juvenile offender who is kept in lawful custody or detention shall be kept separately from an adult offender"*. Pursuant to the above mentioned provision and in accordance with the laws regulating the Ghana Prisons Service, adult prisoners are detained in adult prisons while young offenders and juvenile offenders are detained at the Senior Correctional Centre.

43. Ghana has been implementing a policy of decongesting the prisons through the '***Justice for All Programme***'. Admittedly, overcrowding is a major problem in detention centres, which is caused by the closure of some large holding facilities without their replacement and the ever-increasing remand populations in the various prisons. Consequently, the Ghana Prisons Service in collaboration with other agencies has taken steps to alleviate the situation, which includes the following:

- The facilitation of remand prisoners' access to justice with the assistance of officers who have undergone training as paralegals.
- Introducing periodic court sittings in prisons through the "Justice for All Programme" to hear the cases of inmates with overstayed warrants.
- The periodic transfer of prisoners from notably overcrowded prisons to under-populated prisons.
- Facilitation of the grant of amnesty to selected inmates.
- Expediting work on the completion of the Ankaful Maximum Security Prison to make the facility fully operational.

44. In terms of access to medical care, inmates are registered under the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The Ghana Prisons Service maintains infirmaries in all the prisons nationwide and, where necessary referrals are made to appropriate health centres.

K. Designation of National Preventive Mechanism

45. Even though Ghana has ratified the OPCAT, which requires the establishment of a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) or the designation of an existing agency as the NPM, same has not been done except by law. There is currently no institution clothed with the legal mandate to undertake preventive visits to places of detention. Despite the absence of a legal framework for the establishment of NPM, CHRAJ has been undertaking regular visits to detention centres.

46. There is the possibility that, CHRAJ, having the requisite attributes of a NPM may in the future qualify to be designated Ghana's NPM. There will be the need to amend the law establishing CHRAJ to expand its mandate and functions to include the undertaking of preventive visits to places of detention in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments. In this regard, some changes to the mandate of CHRAJ would be required to make it compliant with the OPCAT, in particular, to aspects relating to financial independence and monitoring methodology.

47. Consideration also needs to be given to the recruitment of qualified experts by CHRAJ, their salaries and emoluments and the provision of adequate resources to enable it operate effectively as a NPM.

L. Human trafficking

48. Ghana is implementing the Child Protection Compact Agreement (CPC), to assist in combating child trafficking in the country.

49. Baseline survey on Human Trafficking was carried out in 2016 as part of the implementation of the CPC Agreement. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been developed to help in the identification of victims of trafficking.

50. Capacity building programmes for personnel of security agencies and social workers to assist them in identification, interviewing, rescuing and assisting victims of trafficking have been instituted. So far about 341 officers have been trained.

51. A Task Force Unit has been established at the Kotoka International Airport and manned by staff of both Ghana Immigration Service and The Anti- Human Trafficking Unit of the Ghana Police Service to prevent young women, men and children from being trafficked through our Airports and also to arrest perpetrators of trafficking for prosecution.

52. Public sensitisation to prevent human trafficking is ongoing. Radio and TV Talk shows/discussions are being used.

53. A National Plan of Action on Human Trafficking is also being developed.

54. The General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) of the Ghana Trades Union Congress (TUC) is implementing a project at Kpondo-Torkor in the Volta Region. This project is aimed at eliminating child trafficking and child labour in the fishing communities along the Volta Lake.

M. Harmful traditional practices

55. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), in collaboration with the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service is implementing a three-year initiative to end Early, Forced Child Marriage (CEFM) in Ghana. The Project aims at changing the attitudes, behaviours and to re-orient the values of the girl-child through mass communicatio s, direct community engagements, media campaigns, and empowerment of the girl-child in local communities.

56. MoGCSP is developing a national strategic framework as the country's guide on how to effectively respond to and prevent CEFM. The National End Child Marriage Project was launched in February, 2016 by the former First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Mrs Lordina Mahama and 5 other African first Ladies in Accra. MoGCSP engaged various stakeholders including Chiefs, Queen mothers, civil society, and communities in the sensitization programmes on ending CEFM.

57. Family Tribunal and Gender–Based Violence Courts have been established to fast track and resolve gender-based violence cases and, more importantly to improve on the administration of justice in respect of gender-based violence.

58. The Bonyase witch camp in the Northern Region, where 150 girls had been held, was closed down on 15th December, 2014. The freed girls from the witch camps were provided humanitarian assistance to help them reintegrate into their communities.

N. Rights to information

59. The Right to Information Bill was published in the Gazette of Wednesday, 31st July, 2013 and laid before Parliament on 12th November, 2013. The Bill is still under consideration by the Parliament of Ghana.

60. The decision in the recent case of ***Lolan Kow Sagoe-Moses & vs. The Hon. Minister for Transport & Attorney-General (Civil Suit No. HR/0027/2015, dated 13th April, 2016)*** will lead the way in ensuring more transparency in government and especially enable journalists and anti-corruption activists to seek information and expose nefarious activities of public officials. The decision is also another major victory for human rights and especially the right to information in Ghana. It presents an important avenue for the enjoyment of the right to information, especially access to official government information.

O. Health care

61. The Mental Health Act, 2012 (Act 846) has established the Mental Health Authority with the mandate of enhancing the living conditions and treatment of patients in psychiatric institutions.

62. For the past three years, about 700 of mental patients have been treated and discharged. The decongestion has also enabled the mental health facilities to improve sanitation.

63. The implementation of MDG5 Acceleration Framework (MAF): maternal mortality has been reduced due to the implementation of the Free Maternal Delivery policy in line with the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

64. Adolescent Reproductive Health Services have been scaled up to include Family Planning services as part of interventions to reduce the resort to unsafe abortions by adolescents.

65. Ghana has adopted the Community-based Health and Planning Services (CHPS) system to increase access to and use of health services in remote communities. This revolutionary system brings trained health care workers directly into the communities and rallies community support behind them to ensure the system's acceptability and sustainability.

66. In July 2016, a new National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan was developed for the years 2016-2020. The National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (NSP 2016-2020) is aligned to the UNAIDS 90-90-90 Treatment targets and aims to reduce new HIV infections and AIDS related deaths by 80%, as well as strengthen Health and Community Systems by 2020. Within the framework, several initiatives are being implemented including the "First 90 Campaign" and the adoption of the "Treat All" Policy to enhance existing programmes towards ultimately ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

67. The Ghana Aids Commission (GAC) has carried out studies on Integrated Biological and Behavioral Sentinel Survey (IBBSS) on female Sex Workers (FSW), Men Who have Sex with Men (MSM) and Prison Inmates, Stigma Index Study and modes of transmission Study, Epidemiological Analysis, Demographic and Health Surveys, to generate strategic information to guide policy decision making and program implementation.

68. The Heart to Heart Campaign is using Persons Living with HIV as Ambassadors to reduce the stigma and discrimination against persons living with HIV. GAC is also

collaborating with CHRAJ to manage the Discrimination Reporting System in accordance with the Ghana Aids Commission Act, 2016 (Act 938).

69. GAC has ensured free registration of People Living with AIDS on the NHIS and has collaborated with the African First Ladies against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA), Ghana chapter, to provide comprehensive and free integrated HIV and reproductive Health Services to community members across the country.

P. Right to education

70. Ghana is implementing free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) to all children of school going age.

71. The Ministry of Education (MoE) will implement Free Senior High School policy in September 2017 as part of efforts to make secondary education accessible.

72. MoE provides a comprehensive package of support which includes school fees, material based support, community engagement activities and trained teacher mentors to provide psychosocial support to children of school going age. In this regard, girls are encouraged to go to school through the provision of some form of vocation or are placed in livelihood programmes. Specifically, the 'Take Home Ration' initiative by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in the three northern parts (Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions) of the country have helped to bridge the gender disparity in education in certain deprived communities. School enrollments in rural communities have increased due to the provision of one hot meal daily to 1,677,322 pupils in all 216 districts in existing beneficiary schools in the country. The School Feeding Programme has also ensured the retention of children in beneficiary communities in schools.

73. In 2015, the Government of Ghana with support from relevant stakeholders completed the development of the Inclusive Education Policy together with a comprehensive Implementation Plan. The Policy defines the strategic path of the government for the education of all children with special educational needs. The Inclusive Education Policy was successfully launched in May, 2016.

74. The Government of Ghana, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders developed a Complementary Basic Education (CBE) Policy. The policy is currently guiding the provision of flexible learning opportunity for out-of-school children mostly located in hard to reach areas. The CBE has supported about 290,000 Out-Of-School Children (OOSC), about 50% being girls, with support from the Development Partners and the Government, from 2012 to 2018.

Q. Women's rights

75. The Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice and the MoGCSP are jointly sponsoring amendment of the Intestate Succession Act, 1987 (PNDC Law 111) with the objective of removing anomalies in the present law relating to Intestate Succession and the provision of a uniform succession law that will be applied throughout the country irrespective of the inheritance system of the intestate and the type of marriage contracted.

76. Article 17 of the 1992 Constitution provides for equality before the law. Thus, every person has equal right to own property irrespective of a person's gender as buttressed in Article 18 of the Constitution to the effect that every person has the right to own property or in association with others. In the context of marriage and property rights of spouses, a Bill is currently before Parliament to regulate the sharing of spousal property in the situation of

divorce and death. The Bill makes provision for the protection of children born out of wedlock and women in cohabiting relationships.

77. DOVVSU of Ghana Police Service has put in place a system to ensure that every case of domestic violence including female genital mutilation that is reported is effectively investigated. DOVVSU works closely with the Judiciary and the Attorney General's Office for the effective prosecution and adjudication of Domestic Violent cases reported.

78. DOVVSU has a 'walk-in' system that allows victims and witnesses to directly report cases. The Unit also maintains a dedicated telephone line which is part of the Ghana Police Service crisis response intervention and linked to police and hospitals facilities nationwide.

79. DOVVSU maintains a referral system for victims that includes medical, legal and counseling services. Officers of DOVVSU have been trained to provide basic counseling to clients and traumatized victims.

80. Family Tribunal and Gender-Based Violence Courts have been established to speedily resolve gender-based violence cases and, more importantly to improve on the administration of justice for gender-based violence.

81. Domestic Violence/ Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DV/SGBV) Response Centres have been established in the Greater Accra Region targeted at market women and head porters ("Kayayei") to report cases of violence to the centres. These centres are manned by officers from DOVVSU, CHRAJ, Social Welfare, Education and Health among others.

R. Affirmative action

82. MoGCSP has developed an Affirmative Bill, which seeks to effectively redress social, economic and educational gender imbalance in Ghana, based on historical discrimination against women which impedes sustainable national development. The Bill also promotes the full and active participation of women in public life by providing for a more equitable system of representation in electoral politics and governance in accordance with the laws of country. Currently, the Bill, which is titled Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill (2014) received Cabinet approval on 9th July 2016 and is now before Parliament. However, Parliament is receiving further inputs from other stakeholders.

83. MoGCSP launched a Gender Policy at the end of 2015 and has been engaging various Ministries using the policy as a basis to promote gender mainstreaming and equality in their institutions. The policy aims to promote a balance in recruitment, improved gender budgeting and enhance gender sensitive programming. Through consistent engagement with the National and Regional House of Chiefs by various stakeholders, both houses have begun the process to admit and fully integrate queen mothers in daily deliberations and key decision-making; a development that marks a significant step in strengthening women leadership in traditional governance institutions.

84. Pending the passage of an Affirmative Action Bill, the MoGCSP and its partners are engaging with political parties using the tenets of the Bill as a basis to increase the election of women into political office.

85. MoGCSP has also developed the Gender Analysis Framework and Planning Templates to guide District Planning and Coordinating Units (DPCUs) in their planning processes. This framework is to ensure gender inclusion in planning processes for poverty reduction, local economic development, agriculture and infrastructural development at the local level.

86. MoGCSP has instituted gender responsive budgeting in all Ministries, Departments and Agencies with a Gender Responsive Budgeting Technical Working Committee also constituted to oversee gender mainstreaming in sector policies and budgets. Training manuals on mainstreaming gender into planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation at the district levels have also been developed and training of officers is ongoing.

S. Rights of the child

87. Ghana has instituted measures to address corporal punishment in schools and other childcare institutions under the Child Friendly School Programming. The Ghana Education Service (GES) has developed a Code of Conduct for Teachers, which defines physical violence to include corporal punishment. Teachers are consequently prohibited from inflicting any form of corporal punishment on a child. The Code has been presented to the Ghana Education Service Council for consideration and approval.

88. Schools in Ghana generally, have codes of conduct for pupils and students, which prescribe corrective measures when children misbehave. The Head-teachers' Handbook has been revised and teachers are being made aware of likely prosecution when children are caned.

89. Since 2012, Government agencies including Department of Children (DOC), Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and CHRAJ have held community forums aimed at sensitizing the population on the negative effects of corporal punishment on children. The DSW and DOC alone have had interaction with over 250,000 people in about 250 communities across the entire country on violence against children.

90. The Child and Family Welfare Policy which is also aimed at eliminating corporal punishment and other forms of abuse against children in both home and school settings has been developed by MoGCSP. Violence against children is one of the priority areas of concern for the Policy. The key strategic interventions under this Policy to address violence and abuse of children include:

(a) Strengthening of community structures (chiefs, queen-mothers, community leaders, religious leaders and faith-based organizations);

(b) Improvement in child and family welfare services;

(c) Empowering children and young people to understand situations of abuse and violence and report to the relevant authorities;

(d) Empowering families and communities to better understand abuse and violence against children and make better choices to prevent and respond to situations of risk.

91. In 2016, a Justice for Children Policy was introduced to protect juvenile offenders, witnesses and child victims of crimes. The Policy will ensure the protection of children throughout their contact with the justice system and as such make access to justice by children a structure within the judicial system of Ghana.

92. Ghana ratified the ILO Convention No. 138 Concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment in 2011. Ghana recently underwent a peer-review by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) mechanism, which identified gaps in its national plan of action on child labour and the need to amend the National Plan of Action (NPA) on Child Labour. To date more than 2,000 children had been rescued from working in the mining industry. Families are also provided livelihood support to discourage them from sending their children to work in the mines. Community-based child protection

teams have been established within mining communities, which have led to the withdrawal of more than 267 children from mining activities.

93. Ghana has instituted a "Births and Deaths Registration Day" celebration which has been observed annually with the aim of sensitizing the Ghanaian citizenry about the importance and benefits associated with the early registration of births and deaths. The event has been marked with national and regional durbars in selected communities around the country since 2004.

94. Currently, the Birth and Death Registry is undertaking Electronic Registration (E-Registration) and as at September 2016 has achieved 63% of success. It now also undertakes monthly mobile Registration.

T. Persons with disabilities

95. The Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) was passed on 23rd June, 2006. This is aimed at ensuring that, persons with disability enjoy the rights enshrined in Article 29 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, with the view to improving their quality of life and that of other vulnerable groups. The law also guarantees persons with disability (PWDs) access to public places, free general and specialist medical care, education, employment and transportation among other things. Section 16-23 of Act 715 provides that a parent or guardian of a child with disability must send the child to school.

96. Strategies and policies have been implemented to enable PWDs to participate in the mainstream of the national development process and dedicating budgetary allocations to organize programmes to create awareness about problems confronting PWDs. MoGCSP provide rehabilitation services, livelihood empowerment progamme to Persons with disabilities. PWDs are a key target of Ghana's Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme with more than 52,082 Persons with Disability already benefiting from LEAP. In 2016, over 3000 Persons with Disability were registered on the National Health Insurance Scheme. Action Aid Ghana, a non-governmental organization, in an effort to empower PWDs in the Upper East Region, has been collaborating with Action for Disability and Development (ADD) since 2004, which has culminated in the construction of a resource centre.

97. The 1992 Constitution and the Children's (Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act 913) make provision for the welfare of persons with disabilities. The Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) also makes provision for access of persons with disabilities to public places, employment, and transportation, along with other rights such as family and social life, education for children with disability and their protection against exploitation and discrimination. In response, MoGCSP has developed the Ghana Standards on Accessibility Designs in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Authority to facilitate access for persons with disability.

98. Act 715 also provides for the creation of Persons with Disability (PWD) Desks at employment centres nationwide and established the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD) in 2007 to oversee the implementation of some of the national programs for persons with disabilities. The NCPD is currently operating under the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection.

99. The Special Education Division of the Ghana Education Service (SPED) has been set up to ensure equitable educational opportunities for children with special needs and disabilities. There are 13 special schools and 24 units (integrated schools) for children with intellectual disabilities, and these are run by SPED. Some private institutions such as the New Horizon basic school in Accra also assists GES to provide learning opportunities for children with special needs.

100. In furtherance of empowering PWDs, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) is required to allocate three percent of the District Assembly Common Fund to support persons with disabilities and other vulnerable children in every district.

101. The proposed amendment to the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 to make it consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will begin with stakeholder consultations on the content of the new Bill. The process is expected to begin in September, 2017 and end in 2018.

102. Currently, over 3000 PWDs have being registered on the NHIS to access medical care freely.

103. PWDs are beneficiaries of LEAP.

IV. Conclusion

104. In compliance with its international human rights and treaty obligations under Article 40 of the 1992 Constitution, Ghana is committed to the implementation of human rights instruments for which it is a party, and will endeavour to take all necessary steps to promote human rights in Ghana and, in particular to continue to strengthen institutions responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights.